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## BOOK REVIEW

PAEDIATRIC PATHOLOGY. By Daniel Stowens, M.D. Second Edition. (Pp xi + 847; Illustrated, 212s.). Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins, Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1966.

THE appearance of a second edition of this important and valuable book seven years after the first is welcomed. Dr. Stowens in his preface expresses pleasure at the opportunity it gives him to correct ideas which, as he says, should never be held sacred or inviolable, and to present new concepts.

A book such as this must consider not only the expert reader but also the junior pathologist and the clinician. It is very difficult for anyone to gain an insight into the conflicting views current on many subjects. The question is whether in a book of this size and authority the author should try to present these conflicting views with citation in the text of the key references, or whether he is entitled to present views and ideas with no clear indication as to whether they are those held by many or some workers or by himself alone. There is often little discussion of the interplay of conflicting opinions in this book. Examples of this might be the author's discussion of hyaline membrane disease and of cot deaths. The expert in the field is interested, stimulated or annoyed by the clear presentation of the author's views, but the less experienced reader is inadequately informed; and no number of references at the end of a chapter can take the place of an analytical review of existing knowledge. The omission of an analysis of the literature and the lack of citation of references in the text of course makes for easier revision of a textbook, but the reviewer considers it is rarely possible to allow that such a textbook is one of the highest scholarship. It can only be admitted as such if it concerns a new and limited field of knowledge which the author has personally explored fully and in depth.

This book must also raise the question of the right of paediatric pathology to be considered a separate division of pathology. The descriptive morphology of many of the conditions considered is adequately or even better given in the larger textbooks of general and special pathology. This book fails to define a biological basis for separating the pathology of this period of life from pathology in general. This failure of a fundamental approach is especially apparent in the chapters on the newborn and on the placenta where discussion under isolated headings may sometimes inform factually but will not increase fundamental understanding.

Despite limitations this is a valuable book and should be available wherever the pathology of children is studied. It will provide help on many problems. It is beautifully illustrated though perhaps too largely by microphotographs. There are numerous references grouped under subject headings at the ends of the chapters. Some heavier pruning of older references might have been useful and there are some peculiar inclusions and omissions, but the range is wide and representative. At present no better book on paediatric pathology exists.

J.E.M.